What is claimed is:

A method for embedding information in an image so that the image will have different information when the image is reproduced by a scanning or printing process, the method comprising the steps of:

embedding digital information in an image;

printing the embedded digital information and the image to produce a original printed image;

scanning the original printed image to obtain a digital image of the embedded information and the image;

determining the signal strength of the original image; and

comparing the signal strength of a printed image with the signal strength of the original printed image to determine whether or not the printed image is a copy of the original printed image.

2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the image is a postal indicia.

3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the image is a graphic.

4. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein a bit map file is created for the original printed image.

5. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the comparing step further including the step of:

measuring the signal strength of the original printed image to set a threshold value for the original printed image and copies of the original printed image.

6. The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of a printed image is greater than the threshold value the printed image is the original printed image.

7. The method claimed in claim 5, whereby if the signal strength of a printed image is less than the threshold value the printed image is not the original printed image.